form a Corporation with Rs. 15,000 crores capital, Rs. 1000 crores coming from the Government, it is no non-profit corporation. Sir, this is a very unsatisfactory answer. This does talk about what exactly is the objective of National Skill Development Mission he is talking about. I just want to raise this issue that it must be understood that this skill development is so vital, almost like the climate change situation, in our country to look for employment for this whole 360 million of unorganised workers, it cannot be based on some kind of corporation, some kind of a profit motive.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question please.

SHRI ARJUN KUMAR SENGUPTA: The question is, will the Minister say that we shall have this mission whatever the cost, the cost will be borne, to the extent possible, if Mr. Kurein's suggestion for private contribution is good, if it is not, the Government will take care of this whole proposition as a public good and work towards that?

SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN: Sir, I am glad that the hon. Member has pointed out the things, which we need to take into consideration. Let me share with the hon. Member, Sir, that the various initiative...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Question Hour is over ...*(Interruptions)*... I am afraid.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Protection of forest land

*304. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that a large area of forests has been wiped out in the last two-three years as per report released by Forest Survey of India;

(b) if so, the details of the States in which forest land has been wiped out;

(c) the exact cause of huge kilometres of forest land being wiped out;

(d) whether Government has since taken any concrete steps to protect the forest land from depletion; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) No, Sir. There are no such reported loss of large forest areas in the past two-three years. The Forest Survey of India, Dehradun carries out assessment of forest cover in the country on biennial basis. In the report recently published by the Forest Survey of India "The State of Forest Report-2005" the assessment of forest cover based on the satellite imageries of the year 2004 has been made. On comparison of the findings of the SFR-2005 with the previous reports, it can be seen that the forest cover in the country has more or less stabilized. The forest covers of the country as per the assessment made in year 2001, 2003 and 2005 are given below:

Assessment Year	2001	2003	2005
Forest Cover (in Km^2)	653,898	677,816	677,088

It can be seen that the forest cover of the country has increased by 23,918 km² between 2001 and 2003 assessments, and decreased marginally by 728 km² between 2003 and 2005 assessments.

(b) and (c) The details of those States/Union Territories where the forest cover has decreased in the assessment made in the SFR, 2005 when compared to assessment made in SFR, 2003, along with the reasons for the decrease in the forest cover are given below:

State/UT	Change in FC (area in sq. Km.)	Important Reasons
Nagaland	-296	Shifting cultivation, flowering of bamboo
Andaman and Nicobar	-178	Tsunami during Dec. 2004
Manipur	-173	Shifting cultivation, flowering of bamboo
Madhya Pradesh	-132	Submergence due to construction of dams on Narmada river (Indira Sagar, Omkareshwara, Madikheda)
Chhattisgarh	-129	Submergence (Champi dam, Bilaspur), shifting cultivation (Bhojmad area, Bastar), illicit felling
Gujarat	-99	Large scale uprooting of *Prosopis juliflora* (Kuchchh district)
Assam	-90	Illicit felling in insurgency affected areas, encroachment, shifting cultivation in hill districts
Andhra Pradesh	-40	Felling of matured plantations by APFDC.
Maharashtra	-38	Felling of matured plantations by the FDC
Uttarakhand	-18	Rehabilitation of the displaced people in forest areas (Haridwar) and rotational felling of Eucalyptus (Udhamsingh Nagar)
TOTAL:	-1193	

(d) and (e) With the view to protecting existing forests the Government has launched a centrally sponsored scheme "Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (IFPS)", with effect from 10th Five Year Plan. Financial assistance is made available on sharing basis for forest fire control and management, strengthening of infrastructure, preparation of working plans and other protection related measures.

During the 10th Five Year Plan a sum of Rs. 204.57 crore was released to State/UTs. This scheme is being continued during the XI Plan. In the first year of XI Plan *i.e.* year 2007-08, a sum of Rs. 66.98 crore was released as on 17.3.2008.